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SELF TAUGHT--A PAINLESS APPROACH.

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A PLAN, FOR USE IN THE SAN DIEGO SCHOOLS, IS OUTLINED FOR A VOLUNTARY, TEACHER-CENTERED, INSERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM TO TAKE PLACE WITHIN THE SCHOOL DAY. THIS PLAN WOULD USE THE MANY AVAILABLE TEACHER EDUCATION FILMS FOR INSERVICE EDUCATION, AVOIDING THE ADDITIONAL INCONVENIENCE ENTAILED IN THE PLANNING AND STAFFING OF WORKSHOPS OR INSERVICE PROGRAMS REQUIRING COURSE ATTENDANCE. THESE FILMS WOULD FORM THE BASIS FOR ALL INSERVICE EDUCATION. EACH MONTH, THE TEACHERS IN EACH DEPARTMENT WOULD SELECT AN APPROPRIATE FILM FOR THEIR STUDENTS TO VIEW IN THE AUDITORIUM, WHILE THEY (THE TEACHERS) WOULD BE VIEWING A RECENT TEACHER EDUCATION FILM CHOSEN FROM A LIST OF 66 COMPILED BY THE SECONDARY INSTRUCTIONAL COMMITTEE. THE PLAN WOULD BE ENTIRELY VOLUNTARY, REQUIRING NO TESTS, TERM PAPERS, OR EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, BUT ALSO OFFERING NO ARTIFICIAL INCENTIVES SUCH AS SALARY CREDITS. THE PILOT PROJECT IS TARGETED TO BEGIN IN JANUARY, 1968, WITH ONE PERSON IN EACH SECONDARY SCHOOL IN THE AREA HAVING BEEN CONTACTED TO AID IN EXPLAINING AND PROMOTING THE PROGRAM. THIS ARTICLE APPEARED IN SDTA BULLETIN, VOLUME 48, NO. 3, DECEMBER, 1967, P. 9. (AW)

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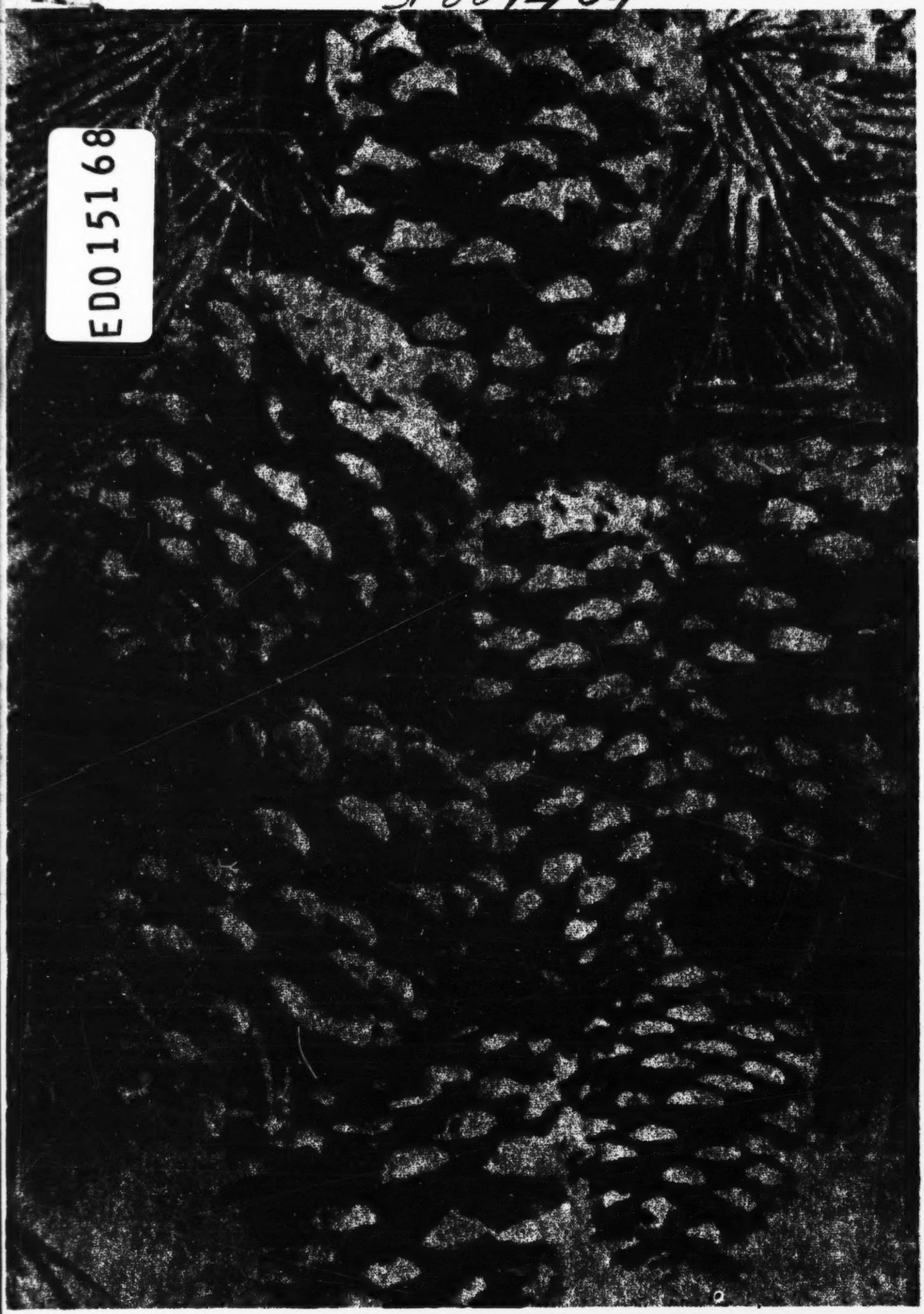

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SELF TAUGHT

A Painless Approach

Norm Polonski, biology teacher at Clairemont High School, is chairman of the Secondary Instruction Committee which is developing a plan for teacher-centered in-service training within the school day.

By NORM POLONSKI

The age of computers is upon us. The knowledge explosion is boomi.ng. As a result, changes in the technology of teaching are occurring at a record pace, and the teacher whose own schooling is well behind him had better find a way to keep up — or he may lose his own private race between education and professional disaster.

As Norm Polonsky, Secondary Instruction Committee Chairman, puts it, "If we can't 'de-fossilize' ourselves, we're lost." Charged with the task of promoting instructional progress, SDTA's Secondary Instruction Committee set about tackling the problem of "teacher obsolescence". They surveyed teachers to determine their attitudes toward in-service education. The results showed that most teachers are intensely interested in new developments in their field, and anxious to keep up-to-date. However, many aren't doing as much about it as they would like to.

The reason is, of course, that they just can't find the time or muster the energy to take on the extra burden of an in-service course. The teacher who bursts into school at 7:30 a.m., ready to tackle the challenge of a new day's classes, is quite understandably less ambitious at 3:30 p.m., with five periods of teaching behind him — and 150 ungraded papers ahead.

Obviously what is needed is a relatively painless approach to in-service education: one which would be teacher-initiated and teacher-dominated; one which requires a minimum of organization and red tape; one which can be pursued **within** the regular teaching day; one which is strictly voluntary; and one which makes no formal demands upon the teacher, other than that he be an interested participant. Sounds great, but isn't it impossible to achieve on this earth?

The Secondary Instruction Committee thinks not, and they've developed the program to prove it. Avoiding the temptation to aim at a perfect, polished product (a goal which would automatically push implementation off into the dim distant future) committee members chose instead to start small, start simple, and start **soon.**

"What," they then asked themselves, "is the best source of untapped, up-to-date information for teachers, available in appealing and dynamic form?" Predictably, they came up with instructional films as the answer. To make it easy for teachers to obtain suitable films, the committee asked SDTA to develop a catalog. Professional Programs Director Lou Boitano drew up a listing of 66 appropriate items, offering teachers a wide choice of topics available to them either through the district A-V Department or — in a limited number of cases — through arrangement with the Association.

Having hit upon their medium, the committee turned to the task of finding time for teachers to see and discuss the films. Following the line of thinking outlined above, they reasoned that working cooperatively, teachers in each department of a school could certainly agree upon one instructional film which would be worthwhile for every student in their department to see. They would select one or two films which were general enough in scope, broad enough in appeal, and effective enough in presentation to merit each student's attention. They would then develop a cooperative lesson plan for presenting the film.

Once each month then, at different periods of the day, teachers in the department would send their students to the auditorium, while they themselves gathered to view and react to a recent teacher-education film which they had selected. Teacher participation would be entirely voluntary, and teachers would encounter no term papers, no tests, and no extra-curricular assignments. There would also be no artificial incentives, no grades, and no salary credits — for the aim of the project is learning for learning's sake alone. At the end of a school year, all students in the department would have seen the one or two films selected for them, while their teachers would have gained the benefits of at least ten films, and ten hours of in-service education.

It would be foolhardy to claim that the project would be completely free of extra demands on teacher time. Obviously, it will require planning to select the films, and to work out the mechanics of the program at each site. Supervision of students in the auditorium, for example, is one detail which would need to be handled. (The committee suggests that, if the school administration is unwilling or unable to provide for supervision, the teachers themselves take it on, on a rotation basis.)

Wasting no time, the committee is already engaged in implementing the project, hopefully to get under way in January. They are attempting to enlist one contact person in each secondary school, to explain and promote the project within each department. One orientation meeting of

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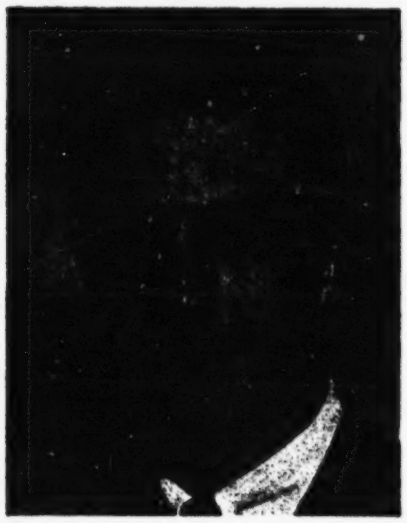
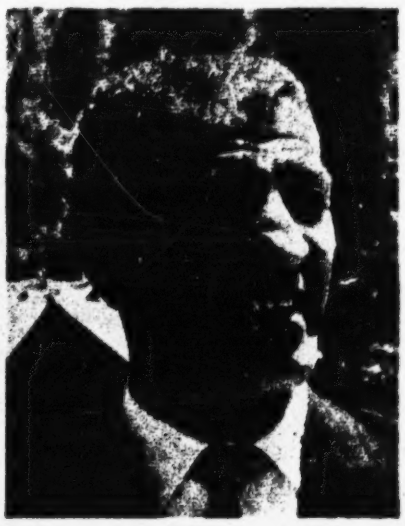


COUNCIL ENDORSEMENT: Don Morrison, i past president of the Association, has been by the SDTA Council for election to the NE tive Committee, the highest elective body i tional association. Don, who teaches social Gompers Junior High School, served last yea dent of the National Council of Urban Educ sociations and is a member of the NEA Boa rectors.



OUTGOING CHAIRMAN HONORED: Eugene "Mike" Peshel was honored by SDTA at the November 15 SDTA Council Meeting, for two years of outstanding service as the first Chairman of the San Diego Certificated Employees Negotiating Council. Presiding over the meeting, Vice-President Don McKenney presented Mike an engraved plaque, while Council Representatives gave him a standing ovation. Mike, an ex-president of SDTA and immediate past president of CTA-Southern Section, is currently serving on the CTA Board of Directors.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

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Let's go back to the original question. What can teachers do to influence the District to provide the type of in-service courses that would benefit them most? I suggest a three-prong attack:

1. Do not continue in a course that is not serving you.
2. Answer honestly the questionnaires that the

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mine our own fate and that, unlike elementary children, we do not need to hold up our hands when we want to speak!

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these contacts has already been held, and the committee hopes that individual departments throughout the district will begin planning immediately.

The advantages of the project are obvious: it would be virtually cost-free; it would encourage more efficient use of outstanding instructional films, projection facilities, and teacher time; it would promote growth in instructional competency among teachers involved, without requiring that they sacrifice either their own time or their instructional program; and it would lead to district-wide instructional progress. Supporting this last idea, Norm Polonsky notes that "by making teachers aware of the possibilities for improvement, you build a demand for those improvements, and vastly increase the chances of attaining them".

Even in the planning stage, the idea is catching on rapidly. Hearing of it for the first time, Elementary Instruction Committee Chairman Betsy Chamberlain was quick to point out that it could easily be adapted for use by elementary teachers, on a grade-level basis. There is no reason why the program could not be expanded in the future to include not only teachers at all levels, but also a wide variety of in-service education opportunities. The possibilities are as endless as the range of interests, ideas, and talents represented among San Diego teachers.